
March 3, 2022



**TESTIMONY OF SCOTT DOLCH, PRESIDENT & CEO,
CONNECTICUT RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION
BEFORE THE FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE**

SB 22: An Act Temporarily Reducing the Rates of the Sales and Use Taxes and the Meals Tax

Good morning Senator Fonfara, Representative Scanlon, Senator Martin, Representative Cheeseman and members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee. My name is Scott Dolch and I am the President & CEO of the Connecticut Restaurant Association. On behalf of Connecticut's 8,500 restaurant and foodservice locations, I am here today in support of Senate Bill 22, An Act Temporarily Reducing the Rates of the Sales and Use Taxes and the Meals Tax.

Over the past 24 months, Connecticut's local restaurant industry has been one of the hardest hit by this pandemic, as we have seen more than 600 local businesses close. Even for those that have managed to stay afloat, they have faced incredible challenges as they have adjusted to new limits on their businesses. While these changes have been difficult, our members have risen to the challenge and they have learned to adapt so that their business can hopefully survive.

This legislation would provide a temporary reduction in the sales and use tax as well as the meals and beverage tax. At a time when our industry is working hard to return to normal, this measure would be a welcome relief and give Connecticut diners one more reason to support their local restaurants, most of which are small businesses and many of them family-owned. This change will not only help restaurant owners, it will also help give the tens of thousands of Connecticut restaurants who work in restaurants increased job security and predictability at a time when they greatly need it. And of course, it will give all Connecticut residents a well-deserved break on their dining bill at a time when they could surely use and appreciate it.

Getting restaurants back to full speed is a great way to get Connecticut's economy going full speed, and our association supports any and every effort for doing that. Thank you for considering my testimony.